



DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Applications for New Awards; National Comprehensive Center
on Improving Literacy for Students with Disabilities

AGENCY: Offices of Elementary and Secondary Education and
Special Education and Rehabilitative Services, Department
of Education.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: The Department of Education (Department) is
issuing a notice inviting applications for a new award for
fiscal year (FY) 2021 for a National Comprehensive Center
on Improving Literacy for Students with Disabilities
(Comprehensive Centers program), Assistance Listing Number
84.283D. This notice relates to the approved information
collection under OMB control number 1894-0006.

DATES: *Applications available:* [INSERT DATE OF PUBLICATION
IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER].

Deadline for transmittal of applications: [INSERT DATE 50
DAYS AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER].

Pre-Application Webinar Information: No later than [INSERT
DATE 5 DAYS AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL
REGISTER], the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP)
will post a pre-recorded informational webinar designed to
provide technical assistance (TA) to interested applicants.

ADDRESSES: For the addresses for obtaining and submitting
an application, please refer to our Common Instructions for

Applicants to Department of Education Discretionary Grant Programs, published in the *Federal Register* on February 13, 2019 (84 FR 3768), and available at www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/FR-2019-02-13/pdf/2019-02206.pdf.

_____The webinar may be found at www2.ed.gov/fund/grant/apply/osep/new-osep-grants.html.
FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Tina Diamond, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, SW, room 5142, Potomac Center Plaza, Washington, DC 20202-5076.
Telephone: (202) 245-6723. Email: Christina.Diamond@ed.gov.

If you use a telecommunications device for the deaf (TDD) or a text telephone (TTY), call the Federal Relay Service (FRS), toll free, at 1-800-877-8339.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Full Text of Announcement

I. Funding Opportunity Description

Purpose of Program: The purpose of the National Comprehensive Center on Improving Literacy for Students with Disabilities (Center) is to identify or develop evidence-based literacy assessment tools and professional development activities and identify evidence-based instruction, strategies, and accommodations for students at risk of not attaining full literacy skills due to a disability, including dyslexia impacting reading or

writing, or developmental delay impacting reading, writing, language processing, comprehension, or executive functioning. The Center will also disseminate its products and information on evidence-based literacy to families, SEAs, LEAs, REAs, and schools.

Priority: This priority is from the notice of final priority, requirement, and definitions (NFP) for this program published elsewhere in this issue of the *Federal Register*.

Absolute Priority: For FY 2021 and any subsequent year in which we make awards from the list of unfunded applications from this competition, this priority is an absolute priority. Under 34 CFR 75.105(c)(3), we consider only applications that meet this priority.

This priority is:

National Comprehensive Center on Improving Literacy for Students with Disabilities.

Background:

Section 2244 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, as amended (ESEA) requires the Secretary to establish a comprehensive center on students at risk of not attaining full literacy skills due to a disability. Comprehensive centers are typically administered by the Office of Elementary and Secondary Education (OESE). OESE is funding this Center; however, because of the Center's subject matter, it will be administered jointly by OESE and OSEP in

the Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services (OSERS).

The project is designed to improve implementation of evidence-based literacy practices in both teacher classroom and remote learning environments. With respect to remote learning, the priority is intended to ensure that teachers have the training and support they need to implement evidence-based literacy practices during remote instruction for students with disabilities, including students with dyslexia impacting reading or writing, or developmental delay impacting reading, writing, language processing, comprehension, or executive functioning. Remote learning plays a critical role in regular instruction and can serve as a crucial link allowing high-quality teaching and learning to continue when regular instruction is disrupted.

Priority:

The purpose of this priority is to fund a cooperative agreement to establish and operate a National Comprehensive Center on Improving Literacy for Students with Disabilities (Center) for children in early childhood education programs through high school. The Center must--

(a) Identify or develop free or low-cost evidence-based assessment tools for identifying students at risk of not attaining full literacy skills due to a disability, including dyslexia impacting reading or writing, or

developmental delay impacting reading, writing, language processing, comprehension, or executive functioning;

(b) Identify evidence-based literacy instruction, strategies, and accommodations, including assistive technology, designed to meet the specific needs of such students;

(c) Provide families of such students with information to assist such students;

(d) Identify or develop evidence-based professional development for teachers, paraprofessionals, principals, other school leaders, and specialized instructional support personnel to--

(1) Understand early indicators of students at risk of not attaining full literacy skills due to a disability, including dyslexia impacting reading or writing, or developmental delay impacting reading, writing, language processing, comprehension, or executive functioning;

(2) Use evidence-based screening assessments for early identification of such students beginning not later than kindergarten;¹ and

(3) Implement evidence-based instruction designed to meet the specific needs of such students; and

(e) Disseminate the products of the comprehensive center to regionally diverse SEAs, REAs, LEAs, and schools,

¹ Applicants are encouraged to identify or develop professional development for using evidence-based screening assessments for early identification of children in early childhood or prekindergarten programs, as well.

including, as appropriate, through partnerships with other comprehensive centers established under section 203 of the Educational Technical Assistance Act of 2002 (20 U.S.C. 9602), and regional educational laboratories established under section 174 of the Education Sciences Reform Act of 2002 (20 U.S.C. 9564).

In addition to these programmatic requirements, to be considered for funding under this priority, applicants must meet the application and administrative requirements in this priority, which are:

(a) Demonstrate, in the narrative section of the application under "Significance," how the proposed project will--

(1) Address current and emerging training and information needs of SEAs, REAs, LEAs, TA centers, schools, and practitioners to select and implement teacher classroom and remote learning environment evidence-based practices (EBPs) that will improve literacy outcomes for students with disabilities, including students with dyslexia impacting reading or writing, or developmental delay impacting reading, writing, language processing, comprehension, or executive functioning. To meet this requirement, the applicant must--

(i) Demonstrate knowledge of current and emerging EBPs, which can be used in reading and literacy-related teacher classroom and remote learning environment

instruction, screening, assessment, and identification or diagnosis of students at risk for not attaining full literacy skills due to a disability, including dyslexia impacting reading or writing, or developmental delay impacting reading, writing, language processing, comprehension, or executive functioning. This includes demonstrating knowledge of current and emerging reading and literacy-related EBPs for students who are English learners; students from a variety of settings (e.g., rural, suburban, urban); students from low-income families; and other educationally disadvantaged students; or

(ii) Demonstrate knowledge of, previous experience with, and results of using creative approaches and implementing in-person and virtual TA strategies to provide capacity-building services and disseminate teacher classroom and remote learning environment EBPs to a variety of entities, including parents, SEAs, REAs, LEAs, schools, Head Start, and other early childhood programs;

(2) Demonstrate a record of improving outcomes in literacy achievement for students at risk for not attaining full literacy skills due to a disability, including dyslexia impacting reading or writing, or developmental delay impacting reading, writing, language processing, comprehension, or executive functioning, in order to better prepare them to compete in a global economy; and

(3) Demonstrate a record of improving the adoption, implementation, and sustainment of teacher classroom and remote learning environment EBPs in literacy instruction for students at risk for not attaining full literacy skills due to a disability, including dyslexia impacting reading or writing, or developmental delay impacting reading, writing, language processing, comprehension, or executive functioning.

(b) Demonstrate, in the narrative section of the application under "Quality of project services," how the proposed project will--

(1) Ensure equal access and treatment for members of groups that have traditionally been underrepresented based on race, color, national origin, sex, age, or disability. To meet this requirement, the applicant must describe how it will--

(i) Identify the needs of the intended recipients for TA and information; and

(ii) Ensure that products and services meet the needs of the intended recipients of the grant;

(2) Achieve its goals, objectives, and intended short-term, intermediate, and long-term outcomes. To meet this requirement, the applicant must provide--

(i) A five-year plan for the Center to identify current and emerging training and information needs and to address the priority;

(ii) Measurable intended project outcomes; and

(iii) In Appendix A, the logic model (as defined in 34 CFR 77.1) by which the proposed project will achieve its intended outcomes that depicts, at a minimum, the goals, activities, outputs, and intended short-term, intermediate, and long-term outcomes of the proposed project;

(3) Use a conceptual framework (and provide a copy in Appendix A) to develop project plans and activities, and describe any underlying concepts, assumptions, expectations, or theories, as well as the presumed relationships or linkages among these variables, and any empirical support for this framework;

Note: The following websites provide more information on logic models and conceptual frameworks:

www.osepideasthatwork.org/logicModel,

www.osepideasthatwork.org/resources-grantees/program-areas/ta-ta/tad-project-logic-model-and-conceptual-framework, and www.federalregister.gov/d/2019-06583.

(4) Be based on current research and make use of EBPs in the development and delivery of its products and services. To meet this requirement, the applicant must describe--

(i) The current research on teacher classroom and remote learning environment EBPs for literacy instruction for students at risk for not attaining full literacy skills due to a disability, including dyslexia impacting reading

or writing, or developmental delay impacting reading, writing, language processing, comprehension, or executive functioning;

(ii) The current research on teacher classroom and remote learning environment EBPs for assessing students at risk for not attaining full literacy skills due to a disability, including dyslexia impacting reading or writing, or developmental delay impacting reading, writing, language processing, comprehension, or executive functioning. This should include the current research on screening assessments for dyslexia and other literacy-related disabilities that are evidence-based, psychometrically valid, free or low-cost, efficient to scale, and readily available for use; and

(iii) The current research about adult learning principles in in-person and virtual settings and implementation science that will inform the proposed TA; and

(5) Develop products or refine or update publicly available existing products and provide in-person and virtual services that are of high quality and sufficient intensity and duration to achieve the intended measurable outcomes of the proposed project. To address this requirement, the applicant must describe--

(i) How it proposes to identify or develop the knowledge base in teacher classroom and remote learning

environment literacy instruction for students at risk of not attaining full literacy skills due to a disability;

(ii) Its proposed approach to universal, general TA, which must identify the intended recipients, including the type and number of recipients, that will receive the products and services under this approach;

(iii) Its proposed approach to targeted, specialized TA, which must identify--

(A) The intended recipients, including the type and number of recipients, that will receive the products and services under this approach, a description of new or existing publicly available products that may be used and services that the Center proposes to make available, and the expected impact of those products and services under this approach; and

(B) Its proposed approach to measure the readiness of potential TA recipients to work with the project, assessing, at a minimum, their current infrastructure, available resources, and ability to build capacity at the local level; and

(iv) Its proposed approach to intensive, sustained TA, which must identify--

(A) The intended recipients, including the type and number of recipients, that will receive the products and services, a description of new or existing publicly available products that may be used and services that the

Center proposes to make available, and the expected impact of those products and services under this approach;

(B) Its proposed approach to measure the readiness of the target audiences to work with the project, including their commitment to the initiative, alignment of the initiative to their needs, current infrastructure, available resources, and ability to build capacity at the SEA, REA, LEA, school, and early childhood education program levels;

(C) Its proposed plan for assisting SEAs, REAs, and LEAs to build or enhance in-person and virtual training systems that include capacity-building services and professional development based on adult learning principles and coaching; and

(D) Its proposed plan for working with appropriate levels of the education system (e.g., SEAs, regional TA providers, districts, schools, early childhood education programs, families) to ensure that there is communication between each level and that there are systems in place to support the use of teacher classroom and remote learning environment EBPs for literacy instruction;

(6) Partner with the National Comprehensive Center and at least one of the other federally funded comprehensive centers, regional educational laboratories, equity assistance centers, OSEP- and other related federally funded TA Centers, parent training and

information and community parent resource centers funded by the Department and OSEP (e.g., Center for Parent Information and Resources and Parent Technical Assistance Centers), and other related organizations to refine or develop products and implement services that maximize efficiency. To address this requirement, the applicant must describe--

(i) How the proposed project will use technology to achieve the intended project outcomes;

(ii) With whom the proposed project will collaborate and the intended outcomes of this collaboration; and

(iii) How the proposed project will use non-project resources to achieve the intended project outcomes; and

(7) Develop a dissemination plan that describes how the applicant will systematically distribute information, products, and services to varied intended audiences, using a variety of in-person and virtual dissemination strategies, to promote awareness and use of the Center's products and services.

(c) In the narrative section of the application under "Quality of the project evaluation," include an evaluation plan for the project developed in consultation with and implemented by a third-party evaluator. The evaluation plan must--

(1) Articulate formative and summative evaluation questions, including important process and outcome

evaluation questions, that are linked directly to the project's proposed logic model required in paragraph (b) (2) (iii) of this notice;

(2) Describe how progress in and fidelity of implementation, as well as project short-term, intermediate, and long-term outcomes, will be measured to answer the evaluation questions. Specify the measures and associated instruments or sources for data appropriate to the evaluation questions. Include information regarding reliability and validity of measures where appropriate;

(3) Describe strategies for analyzing data and how data collected as part of this plan will be used to inform and improve service delivery over the course of the project and to refine the proposed logic model and evaluation plan, including subsequent data collection;

(4) Provide a timeline for conducting the evaluation and include staff assignments for completing the plan. The timeline must indicate that the data will be available annually for the annual performance report (APR); and

(5) Dedicate sufficient funds in each budget year to cover the costs of developing or refining the evaluation plan in collaboration with a third-party evaluator and the costs associated with the implementation of the evaluation plan by the third-party evaluator.

(d) Demonstrate, in the narrative section of the application under "Adequacy of resources and quality of project personnel," how--

(1) The proposed project will ensure equal access for employment for all, including those who are members of groups that have traditionally been underrepresented based on race, color, national origin, sex, age, religion, or disability;

(2) The proposed key project personnel, consultants, and subcontractors have the qualifications, subject-matter expertise, and technical experience to carry out the proposed activities, achieve the project's intended outcomes, and develop ongoing partnerships with leading experts and organizations nationwide to inform project activities;

(3) The applicant and any key partners have adequate resources to carry out the proposed activities; and

(4) The proposed costs are reasonable in relation to the anticipated results and benefits.

(e) Demonstrate, in the narrative section of the application under "Quality of the management plan," how--

(1) The proposed management plan will ensure that the project's intended outcomes will be achieved on time and within budget. To address this requirement, the applicant must describe--

(i) Clearly defined responsibilities for key project personnel, consultants, and subcontractors, as applicable; and

(ii) Timelines and milestones for accomplishing the project tasks;

(2) Key project personnel and any consultants and subcontractors will be allocated and how these allocations are appropriate and adequate to achieve the project's intended outcomes. The identified project director should be, at minimum, 0.5 full-time equivalency throughout the project period;

(3) The proposed management plan will ensure that the products and services provided are of high quality, relevant, and useful to recipients; and

(4) The proposed project will benefit from a diversity of perspectives, including those of families, general and special education teachers, paraprofessionals, principals, other school leaders, specialized instructional support personnel, TA providers, researchers, institutions of higher education (IHEs), and policy makers, among others, in its development and operation.

(f) Address the following additional application requirements. The applicant must--

(1) Include, in Appendix A, personnel-loading charts and timelines, as applicable, to illustrate the management plan described in the narrative;

(2) Include, in the budget, attendance at the following:

(i) A one and one-half day kick-off meeting in Washington, DC, or virtually, after receipt of the award, and an annual planning meeting in Washington, DC, or virtually, with the OSEP project officer, OESE staff, and other relevant staff during each subsequent year of the project period.

Note: Within 30 days of receipt of the award, a post-award teleconference must be held between the OSEP project officer and the grantee's project director or other authorized representative;

(ii) A two and one-half day project directors' conference in Washington, DC, or a virtual conference, during each year of the project period;

(iii) Two annual two-day trips to attend Department briefings, Department-sponsored conferences, and other meetings, as requested by OSEP; and

(iv) At least monthly, communicate and collaborate with other Department-funded centers to achieve project objectives;

(3) Include, in the budget, a line item for an annual set-aside of 5 percent of the grant amount to support emerging needs that are consistent with the proposed project's intended outcomes, as those needs are identified in consultation with, and approved by, the OSEP project

officer. With approval from the OSEP project officer, the project must reallocate any remaining funds from this annual set-aside no later than the end of the third quarter of each budget period;

(4) Include a plan for maintaining a high-quality website, with an easy-to-navigate design, that meets government or industry-recognized standards for accessibility;

(5) Include a plan for ensuring that annual project progress toward meeting project goals is posted on the project website;

(6) Include, in Appendix A, a letter of agreement from each partnering organization or consultant. The letter of agreement should clearly specify the role of the partnering organization or consultant and the time needed to fulfill the commitment to the project; and

(7) Include, in Appendix A, an assurance to assist OSEP and OESE with the transfer of pertinent resources and products and to maintain the continuity of services to target audiences during the transition to this new award period and at the end of this award period, as appropriate.

Definitions:

The following definitions apply to this competition. We provide the source of the definitions in parentheses.

Capacity-building services means assistance that strengthens an individual's or organization's ability to

engage in continuous improvement and achieve expected outcomes. (NFP)

Demonstrates a rationale means a key project component included in the project's logic model is informed by research or evaluation findings that suggest the project component is likely to improve relevant outcomes. (34 CFR 77.1)

Evidence-based means the proposed project component is supported by one or more of strong evidence, moderate evidence, promising evidence, or evidence that demonstrates a rationale. (34 CFR 77.1)

Experimental study means a study that is designed to compare outcomes between two groups of individuals (such as students) that are otherwise equivalent except for their assignment to either a treatment group receiving a project component or a control group that does not. Randomized controlled trials, regression discontinuity design studies, and single-case design studies are the specific types of experimental studies that, depending on their design and implementation (e.g., sample attrition in randomized controlled trials and regression discontinuity design studies), can meet What Works Clearinghouse (WWC) standards without reservations as described in the WWC Handbooks:

(i) A randomized controlled trial employs random assignment of, for example, students, teachers, classrooms, or schools to receive the project component being evaluated

(the treatment group) or not to receive the project component (the control group).

(ii) A regression discontinuity design study assigns the project component being evaluated using a measured variable (e.g., assigning students reading below a cutoff score to tutoring or developmental education classes) and controls for that variable in the analysis of outcomes.

(iii) A single-case design study uses observations of a single case (e.g., a student eligible for a behavioral intervention) over time in the absence and presence of a controlled treatment manipulation to determine whether the outcome is systematically related to the treatment. (34 CFR 77.1)

Fidelity means the delivery of instruction in the way in which it was designed to be delivered. (NFP)

Intensive, sustained TA means TA services often provided on-site and requiring a stable, ongoing relationship between the TA center staff and the TA recipient. This category of TA should result in changes to policy, program, practice, or operations that support increased recipient capacity or improved outcomes at one or more systems levels. (NFP)

Logic model (also referred to as a theory of action) means a framework that identifies key project components of the proposed project (i.e., the active "ingredients" that are hypothesized to be critical to achieving the relevant

outcomes) and describes the theoretical and operational relationships among the key project components and relevant outcomes. (34 CFR 77.1)

Moderate evidence means that there is evidence of effectiveness of a key project component in improving a relevant outcome for a sample that overlaps with the populations or settings proposed to receive that component, based on a relevant finding from one of the following:

(i) A practice guide prepared by the WWC using version 2.1, 3.0, 4.0, or 4.1 of the WWC Handbooks reporting a "strong evidence base" or "moderate evidence base" for the corresponding practice guide recommendation;

(ii) An intervention report prepared by the WWC using version 2.1, 3.0, 4.0, or 4.1 of the WWC Handbooks reporting a "positive effect" or "potentially positive effect" on a relevant outcome based on a "medium to large" extent of evidence, with no reporting of a "negative effect" or "potentially negative effect" on a relevant outcome; or

(iii) A single experimental study or quasi-experimental design study reviewed and reported by the WWC using version 2.1, 3.0, 4.0, or 4.1 of the WWC Handbooks, or otherwise assessed by the Department using version 4.1 of the WWC Handbooks, as appropriate, and that—

(A) Meets WWC standards with or without reservations;

(B) Includes at least one statistically significant and positive (i.e., favorable) effect on a relevant outcome;

(C) Includes no overriding statistically significant and negative effects on relevant outcomes reported in the study or in a corresponding WWC intervention report prepared under version 2.1, 3.0, 4.0, or 4.1 of the WWC Handbooks; and

(D) Is based on a sample from more than one site (e.g., State, county, city, school district, or postsecondary campus) and includes at least 350 students or other individuals across sites. Multiple studies of the same project component that each meet requirements in paragraphs (iii)(A), (B), and (C) of this definition may together satisfy the requirement in this paragraph (iii)(D). (34 CFR 77.1)

Project component means an activity, strategy, intervention, process, product, practice, or policy included in a project. Evidence may pertain to an individual project component or to a combination of project components (e.g., training teachers on instructional practices for English learners and follow-on coaching for these teachers). (34 CFR 77.1)

Promising evidence means that there is evidence of the effectiveness of a key project component in improving a

relevant outcome, based on a relevant finding from one of the following:

(i) A practice guide prepared by WWC reporting a "strong evidence base" or "moderate evidence base" for the corresponding practice guide recommendation;

(ii) An intervention report prepared by the WWC reporting a "positive effect" or "potentially positive effect" on a relevant outcome with no reporting of a "negative effect" or "potentially negative effect" on a relevant outcome; or

(iii) A single study assessed by the Department, as appropriate, that--

(A) Is an experimental study, a quasi-experimental design study, or a well-designed and well-implemented correlational study with statistical controls for selection bias (e.g., a study using regression methods to account for differences between a treatment group and a comparison group); and

(B) Includes at least one statistically significant and positive (i.e., favorable) effect on a relevant outcome. (34 CFR 77.1)

Quasi-experimental design study means a study using a design that attempts to approximate an experimental study by identifying a comparison group that is similar to the treatment group in important respects. This type of study, depending on design and implementation (e.g., establishment

of baseline equivalence of the groups being compared), can meet WWC standards with reservations, but cannot meet WWC standards without reservations, as described in the WWC Handbooks. (34 CFR 77.1)

Regional educational agency, for the purposes of this program, means "Tribal Educational Agency" as defined in ESEA section 6132(b)(3), as well as other educational agencies that serve regional areas. (NFP)

Relevant outcome means the student outcome(s) or other outcome(s) the key project component is designed to improve, consistent with the specific goals of the program. (34 CFR 77.1)

Strong evidence means that there is evidence of the effectiveness of a key project component in improving a relevant outcome for a sample that overlaps with the populations and settings proposed to receive that component, based on a relevant finding from one of the following:

(i) A practice guide prepared by the WWC using version 2.1, 3.0, 4.0, or 4.1 of the WWC Handbooks reporting a "strong evidence base" for the corresponding practice guide recommendation;

(ii) An intervention report prepared by the WWC using version 2.1, 3.0, 4.0, or 4.1 of the WWC Handbooks reporting a "positive effect" on a relevant outcome based on a "medium to large" extent of evidence, with no

reporting of a “negative effect” or “potentially negative effect” on a relevant outcome; or

(iii) A single experimental study reviewed and reported by the WWC using version 2.1, 3.0, 4.0, or 4.1 of the WWC Handbooks, or otherwise assessed by the Department using version 4.1 of the WWC Handbooks, as appropriate, and that--

(A) Meets WWC standards without reservations;

(B) Includes at least one statistically significant and positive (i.e., favorable) effect on a relevant outcome;

(C) Includes no overriding statistically significant and negative effects on relevant outcomes reported in the study or in a corresponding WWC intervention report prepared under version 2.1, 3.0, 4.0, or 4.1 of the WWC Handbooks; and

(D) Is based on a sample from more than one site (e.g., State, county, city, school district, or postsecondary campus) and includes at least 350 students or other individuals across sites. Multiple studies of the same project component that each meet requirements in paragraphs (iii)(A), (B), and (C) of this definition may together satisfy this requirement. (34 CFR 77.1)

TA services are defined as negotiated series of activities designed to reach a valued outcome. (NFP)

Targeted, specialized TA means TA services based on needs common to multiple recipients and not extensively individualized. A relationship is established between the TA recipient and one or more TA center staff. This category of TA includes one-time, labor-intensive events, such as facilitating strategic planning or hosting regional or national conferences. It can also include episodic, less labor-intensive events that extend over a period of time, such as facilitating a series of conference calls on single or multiple topics that are designed around the needs of the recipients. Facilitating communities of practice can also be considered targeted, specialized TA. (NFP)

Third-party evaluator is an independent and impartial program evaluator who is contracted by the grantee to conduct an objective evaluation of the project. This evaluator must not have participated in the development or implementation of any project activities, except for the evaluation activities, nor have any financial interest in the outcome of the evaluation. (NFP)

Universal, general TA means TA and information provided to independent users through their own initiative, resulting in minimal interaction with TA center staff and including one-time, invited or offered conference presentations by TA center staff. This category of TA also includes information or products, such as newsletters,

guidebooks, or research syntheses, downloaded from the TA center's website by independent users. Brief communications by TA center staff with recipients, either by telephone or email, are also considered universal, general TA. (NFP)

What Works Clearinghouse Handbooks (WWC Handbooks)

means the standards and procedures set forth in the WWC Standards Handbook, Versions 4.0 or 4.1, and WWC Procedures Handbook, Versions 4.0 or 4.1, or in the WWC Procedures and Standards Handbook, Version 3.0 or Version 2.1 (all incorporated by reference, see §77.2). Study findings eligible for review under WWC standards can meet WWC standards without reservations, meet WWC standards with reservations, or not meet WWC standards. WWC practice guides and intervention reports include findings from systematic reviews of evidence as described in the WWC Handbooks documentation. (34 CFR 77.1)

Program Authority: Section 203 of the Educational Technical Assistance Act of 2002 (ETAA) (20 U.S.C. 9602) and section 2244 of the ESEA (20 U.S.C. 6674).

Note: The project will be awarded and must be operated in a manner consistent with the nondiscrimination requirements contained in Federal civil rights laws.

Applicable Regulations: (a) The Education Department General Administrative Regulations in 34 CFR parts 75, 77, 79, 81, 82, 84, 86, 97, 98, and 99. (b) The Office of

Management and Budget Guidelines to Agencies on Governmentwide Debarment and Suspension (Nonprocurement) in 2 CFR part 180, as adopted and amended as regulations of the Department in 2 CFR part 3485. (c) The Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards in 2 CFR part 200, as adopted and amended as regulations of the Department in 2 CFR part 3474. (d) The NFP.

Note: The regulations in 34 CFR part 86 apply to IHEs only.

II. Award Information

Type of Award: Cooperative agreement.

Estimated Available Funds: \$1,475,000 in year one; \$1,500,000 in years two through five.

Contingent upon the availability of funds and the quality of applications, we may make additional awards in FY 2022 from the list of unfunded applications from this competition.

Maximum Award: We will not make an award exceeding \$1,475,000 for a single budget period of 12 months in year one and \$1,500,000 for a single budget period of 12 months in years two through five.

Estimated Number of Awards: 1.

Note: The Department is not bound by any estimates in this notice.

Project Period: Up to 60 months.

III. Eligibility Information

1. Eligible Applicants: Research organizations, institutions, agencies, IHEs, or partnerships among such entities, or individuals, with the demonstrated ability or capacity to carry out the activities described in this notice, including regional entities that carried out activities under the Educational Research, Development, Dissemination, and Improvement Act of 1994 (as such Act existed on the day before November 5, 2002) and title XIII of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (as such title existed on the day before January 8, 2002).

Note: If you are a nonprofit organization, under 34 CFR 75.51, you may demonstrate your nonprofit status by providing: (1) proof that the Internal Revenue Service currently recognizes the applicant as an organization to which contributions are tax deductible under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code; (2) a statement from a State taxing body or the State attorney general certifying that the organization is a nonprofit organization operating within the State and that no part of its net earnings may lawfully benefit any private shareholder or individual; (3) a certified copy of the applicant's certificate of incorporation or similar document if it clearly establishes the nonprofit status of the applicant; or (4) any item described above if that item applies to a State or national parent organization,

together with a statement by the State or parent organization that the applicant is a local nonprofit affiliate.

2. a. Cost Sharing or Matching: This competition does not require cost sharing or matching.

b. Indirect Cost Rate Information: This program uses an unrestricted indirect cost rate. For more information regarding indirect costs, or to obtain a negotiated indirect cost rate, please see www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocfo/intro.html.

c. Administrative Cost Limitation: This program does not include any program-specific limitation on administrative expenses. All administrative expenses must be reasonable and necessary and conform to the Cost Principles described in 2 CFR part 200 subpart E of the Uniform Guidance.

3. Subgrantees: A grantee under this competition may not award subgrants to entities to directly carry out project activities described in its application. Under 34 CFR 75.708(e), a grantee may contract for supplies, equipment, and other services in accordance with 2 CFR part 200.

IV. Application and Submission Information

1. Application Submission Instructions: Applicants are required to follow the Common Instructions for Applicants to Department of Education Discretionary Grant

Programs, published in the *Federal Register* on February 13, 2019 (84 FR 3768), and available at www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/FR-2019-02-13/pdf/2019-02206.pdf, which contain requirements and information on how to submit an application.

2. Intergovernmental Review: This competition is subject to Executive Order 12372 and the regulations in 34 CFR part 79. However, under 34 CFR 79.8(a), we waive intergovernmental review in order to make an award/awards by the end of FY 2021.

3. Funding Restrictions: We reference regulations outlining funding restrictions in the Applicable Regulations section of this notice.

4. Recommended Page Limit: The application narrative is where you, the applicant, address the selection criteria that reviewers use to evaluate your application. We recommend that you (1) limit the application narrative to no more than 70 pages and (2) use the following standards:

- A "page" is 8.5" x 11", on one side only, with 1" margins at the top, bottom, and both sides.
- Double-space (no more than three lines per vertical inch) all text in the application narrative, including titles, headings, footnotes, quotations, reference citations, and captions, as well as all text in charts, tables, figures, graphs, and screen shots.
- Use a font that is 12 point or larger.

- Use one of the following fonts: Times New Roman, Courier, Courier New, or Arial.

The recommended page limit does not apply to the cover sheet; the budget section, including the narrative budget justification; the assurances and certifications; or the abstract (follow the guidance provided in the application package for completing the abstract), the table of contents, the list of priority requirements, the resumes, the reference list, the letters of support, or the appendices. However, the recommended page limit does apply to all of the application narrative, including all text in charts, tables, figures, graphs, and screen shots.

V. Application Review Information

1. Selection Criteria: The selection criteria for this competition are from 34 CFR 75.210 and are as follows:

(a) Significance (10 points).

(1) The Secretary considers the significance of the proposed project.

(2) In determining the significance of the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(i) The extent to which specific gaps or weaknesses in services, infrastructure, or opportunities have been identified and will be addressed by the proposed project, including the nature and magnitude of those gaps or weaknesses; and

(ii) The importance or magnitude of the results or outcomes likely to be attained by the proposed project.

(b) Quality of project services (30 points).

(1) The Secretary considers the quality of the services to be provided by the proposed project.

(2) In determining the quality of the services to be provided by the proposed project, the Secretary considers the quality and sufficiency of strategies for ensuring equal access and treatment for eligible project participants who are members of groups that have traditionally been underrepresented based on race, color, national origin, gender, age, or disability.

(3) In addition, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(i) The extent to which the goals, objectives, and outcomes to be achieved by the proposed project are clearly specified and measurable;

(ii) The extent to which there is a conceptual framework underlying the proposed research or demonstration activities and the quality of that framework;

(iii) The extent to which the services to be provided by the proposed project reflect up-to-date knowledge from research and effective practice;

(iv) The extent to which the training or professional development services to be provided by the proposed project are of sufficient quality, intensity, and duration to lead

to improvements in practice among the recipients of those services; and

(v) The extent to which the TA services to be provided by the proposed project involve the use of efficient strategies, including the use of technology, as appropriate, and the leveraging of non-project resources.

(c) Quality of the project evaluation (20 points).

(1) The Secretary considers the quality of the evaluation to be conducted of the proposed project.

(2) In determining the quality of the evaluation, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(i) The extent to which the methods of evaluation are thorough, feasible, and appropriate to the goals, objectives, and outcomes of the proposed project;

(ii) The extent to which the methods of evaluation provide for examining the effectiveness of project implementation strategies;

(iii) The extent to which the methods of evaluation will provide performance feedback and permit periodic assessment of progress toward achieving intended outcomes; and

(iv) The extent to which the methods of evaluation include the use of objective performance measures that are clearly related to the intended outcomes of the project and will produce quantitative and qualitative data to the extent possible.

(d) Adequacy of resources and quality of project personnel (20 points).

(1) The Secretary considers the adequacy of resources for the proposed project and the quality of the personnel who will carry out the proposed project.

(2) In determining the quality of project personnel, the Secretary considers the extent to which the applicant encourages applications for employment from persons who are members of groups that have traditionally been underrepresented based on race, color, national origin, gender, age, or disability.

(3) In addition, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(i) The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of the project director or principal investigator;

(ii) The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of key project personnel;

(iii) The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of project consultants or subcontractors;

(iv) The qualifications, including relevant training, experience, and independence, of the evaluator;

(v) The adequacy of support, including facilities, equipment, supplies, and other resources, from the applicant organization or the lead applicant organization;

(vi) The relevance and demonstrated commitment of each partner in the proposed project to the implementation and success of the project;

(vii) The extent to which the budget is adequate to support the proposed project; and

(viii) The extent to which the costs are reasonable in relation to the objectives, design, and potential significance of the proposed project.

(e) Quality of the management plan (20 points).

(1) The Secretary considers the quality of the management plan for the proposed project.

(2) In determining the quality of the management plan for the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(i) The adequacy of the management plan to achieve the objectives of the proposed project on time and within budget, including clearly defined responsibilities, timelines, and milestones for accomplishing project tasks;

(ii) The extent to which the time commitments of the project director and principal investigator and other key project personnel are appropriate and adequate to meet the objectives of the proposed project;

(iii) The adequacy of mechanisms for ensuring high-quality products and services from the proposed project; and

(iv) How the applicant will ensure that a diversity of perspectives are brought to bear in the operation of the proposed project, including those of parents, teachers, the business community, a variety of disciplinary and professional fields, recipients or beneficiaries of services, or others, as appropriate.

2. Review and Selection Process: We remind potential applicants that in reviewing applications in any discretionary grant competition, the Secretary may consider, under 34 CFR 75.217(d)(3), the past performance of the applicant in carrying out a previous award, such as the applicant's use of funds, achievement of project objectives, and compliance with grant conditions. The Secretary may also consider whether the applicant failed to submit a timely performance report or submitted a report of unacceptable quality.

In addition, in making a competitive grant award, the Secretary requires various assurances, including those applicable to Federal civil rights laws that prohibit discrimination in programs or activities receiving Federal financial assistance from the Department (34 CFR 100.4, 104.5, 106.4, 108.8, and 110.23).

3. Additional Review and Selection Process Factors: In the past, the Department has had difficulty finding peer reviewers for certain competitions because so many individuals who are eligible to serve as peer reviewers

have conflicts of interest. Therefore, the Department has determined that for some discretionary grant competitions, applications may be separated into two or more groups and ranked and selected for funding within specific groups. This procedure will make it easier for the Department to find peer reviewers by ensuring that greater numbers of individuals who are eligible to serve as reviewers for any particular group of applicants will not have conflicts of interest. It also will increase the quality, independence, and fairness of the review process, while permitting panel members to review applications under discretionary grant competitions for which they also have submitted applications.

4. Risk Assessment and Specific Conditions:

Consistent with 2 CFR 200.206, before awarding grants under this competition the Department conducts a review of the risks posed by applicants. Under 2 CFR 200.208, the Secretary may impose specific conditions, and under 2 CFR 3474.10, in appropriate circumstances, high-risk conditions on a grant if the applicant or grantee is not financially stable; has a history of unsatisfactory performance; has a financial or other management system that does not meet the standards in 2 CFR part 200, subpart D; has not fulfilled the conditions of a prior grant; or is otherwise not responsible.

5. Integrity and Performance System: If you are selected under this competition to receive an award that over the course of the project period may exceed the simplified acquisition threshold (currently \$250,000), under 2 CFR 200.206(a)(2) we must make a judgment about your integrity, business ethics, and record of performance under Federal awards--that is, the risk posed by you as an applicant--before we make an award. In doing so, we must consider any information about you that is in the integrity and performance system (currently referred to as the Federal Awardee Performance and Integrity Information System (FAPIIS)), accessible through the System for Award Management. You may review and comment on any information about yourself that a Federal agency previously entered and that is currently in FAPIIS.

Please note that, if the total value of your currently active grants, cooperative agreements, and procurement contracts from the Federal Government exceeds \$10,000,000, the reporting requirements in 2 CFR part 200, Appendix XII, require you to report certain integrity information to FAPIIS semiannually. Please review the requirements in 2 CFR part 200, Appendix XII, if this grant plus all the other Federal funds you receive exceed \$10,000,000.

6. In General: In accordance with the Office of Management and Budget's guidance located at 2 CFR part 200, all applicable Federal laws, and relevant

Executive guidance, the Department will review and consider applications for funding pursuant to this notice inviting applications in accordance with--

(a) Selecting recipients most likely to be successful in delivering results based on the program objectives through an objective process of evaluating Federal award applications (2 CFR 200.205);

(b) Prohibiting the purchase of certain telecommunication and video surveillance services or equipment in alignment with section 889 of the National Defense Authorization Act of 2019 (Pub. L. No. 115-232) (2 CFR 200.216);

(c) Providing a preference, to the extent permitted by law, to maximize use of goods, products, and materials produced in the United States (2 CFR 200.322); and

(d) Terminating agreements in whole or in part to the greatest extent authorized by law if an award no longer effectuates the program goals or agency priorities (2 CFR 200.340).

VI. Award Administration Information

1. Award Notices: If your application is successful, we notify your U.S. Representative and U.S. Senators and send you a Grant Award Notification (GAN); or we may send you an email containing a link to access an electronic version of your GAN. We may notify you informally, also.

If your application is not evaluated or not selected for funding, we notify you.

2. Administrative and National Policy Requirements:

We identify administrative and national policy requirements in the application package and reference these and other requirements in the Applicable Regulations section of this notice.

We reference the regulations outlining the terms and conditions of an award in the Applicable Regulations section of this notice and include these and other specific conditions in the GAN. The GAN also incorporates your approved application as part of your binding commitments under the grant.

3. Open Licensing Requirements: Unless an exception applies, if you are awarded a grant under this competition, you will be required to openly license to the public grant deliverables created in whole, or in part, with Department grant funds. When the deliverable consists of modifications to pre-existing works, the license extends only to those modifications that can be separately identified and only to the extent that open licensing is permitted under the terms of any licenses or other legal restrictions on the use of pre-existing works. Additionally, a grantee that is awarded competitive grant funds must have a plan to disseminate these public grant deliverables. This dissemination plan can be developed and

submitted after your application has been reviewed and selected for funding. For additional information on the open licensing requirements please refer to 2 CFR 3474.20.

4. Reporting: (a) If you apply for a grant under this competition, you must ensure that you have in place the necessary processes and systems to comply with the reporting requirements in 2 CFR part 170 should you receive funding under the competition. This does not apply if you have an exception under 2 CFR 170.110(b).

(b) At the end of your project period, you must submit a final performance report, including financial information, as directed by the Secretary. If you receive a multiyear award, you must submit an annual performance report that provides the most current performance and financial expenditure information as directed by the Secretary under 34 CFR 75.118. The Secretary may also require more frequent performance reports under 34 CFR 75.720(c). For specific requirements on reporting, please go to www.ed.gov/fund/grant/apply/appforms/appforms.html.

5. Performance Measures: For the purposes of the Government Performance and Results Act of 1993 (GPRA) and reporting under 34 CFR 75.110, the Department will use the following measures to evaluate the effectiveness of the Center, as well as the Comprehensive Centers program as a whole:

- Program Performance Measure 1: The extent to which Comprehensive Center clients are satisfied with the quality, usefulness, and relevance of services provided.

- Program Performance Measure 2: The extent to which Comprehensive Centers provide services and products to a wide range of recipients.

- Program Performance Measure 3: The extent to which Comprehensive Centers demonstrate that capacity-building services were implemented as intended.

- Program Performance Measure 4: The extent to which Comprehensive Centers demonstrate recipient outcomes were met.

The measures apply to projects funded under this competition, and grantees are required to submit data on these measures as directed by OSEP and OESE.

Grantees will be required to report information on their project's performance in annual and final performance reports to the Department (34 CFR 75.590).

The Department will also closely monitor the extent to which the products and services provided by the Center meet needs identified by stakeholders and may require the Center to report on such alignment in their annual and final performance reports.

6. Continuation Awards: In making a continuation award under 34 CFR 75.253, the Secretary considers, among other things: whether a grantee has made substantial

progress in achieving the goals and objectives of the project; whether the grantee has expended funds in a manner that is consistent with its approved application and budget; and, if the Secretary has established performance measurement requirements, whether the grantee has made substantial progress in achieving the performance targets in the grantee's approved application.

In making a continuation award, the Secretary also considers whether the grantee is operating in compliance with the assurances in its approved application, including those applicable to Federal civil rights laws that prohibit discrimination in programs or activities receiving Federal financial assistance from the Department (34 CFR 100.4, 104.5, 106.4, 108.8, and 110.23).

VII. Other Information

Accessible Format: On request to the program contact person listed under FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT, individuals with disabilities can obtain this document and a copy of the application package in an accessible format. The Department will provide the requestor with an accessible format that may include Rich Text Format (RTF) or text format (txt), a thumb drive, an MP3 file, braille, large print, audiotape, or compact disc, or other accessible format.

Electronic Access to This Document: The official version of this document is the document published in the *Federal*

Register. You may access the official edition of the *Federal Register* and the Code of Federal Regulations at www.govinfo.gov. At this site you can view this document, as well as all other documents of this Department published in the *Federal Register*, in text or Portable Document Format (PDF). To use PDF you must have Adobe Acrobat Reader, which is available free at the site.

You may also access documents of the Department published in the *Federal Register* by using the article search feature at www.federalregister.gov. Specifically, through the advanced search feature at this site, you can limit your search to documents published by the Department.

David Cantrell,
*Deputy Director, Office of Special
Education Programs.
Delegated the authority to perform
the functions and duties of the
Assistant Secretary for the Office
of Special Education and
Rehabilitative Services.*

Ian Rosenblum,
*Deputy Assistant Secretary for
Policy and Programs.
Delegated the authority to perform
the functions and duties of the
Assistant Secretary, Office of
Elementary and Secondary
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